

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Statement of Chairman Bennie G. Thompson****“Addressing the Nation’s Cybersecurity Challenges: Reducing Vulnerabilities Requires Strategic Investment and Immediate Action”**

April 25, 2007 (Washington) – Today, Committee on Homeland Security Chairman Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) delivered the following prepared remarks for the Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity, and Science and Technology Subcommittee hearing entitled “Addressing the Nation’s Cybersecurity Challenges: Reducing Vulnerabilities Requires Strategic Investment and Immediate Action”:

“It is clear that our government, working together with the private sector and academia, must do more to ensure that Cybersecurity is a priority in our nation’s homeland security strategy.

In 1996, the United States government undertook the first national effort to secure our networks. Unfortunately, I don’t believe that we are any further along today in our efforts to secure cyberspace. Programs and initiatives that were developed over the past ten years have been dismantled and, in certain instances, are just now being re-created by the government.

We heard in last week’s hearing that “coordinating better cyber security practices across the Federal government” is one of Secretary Chertoff’s “highest priorities.” But this rings hollow to me when I think about how long it took him to appoint an Assistant Secretary for Cybersecurity.

I also wonder why the Secretary believes that the Department will be able to coordinate better cyber security practices across the Federal government, when his own Chief Information Officer just received a “D” in the recent FISMA grades.

So we have a lot of work to do, but fortunately we have some very capable people who can help.”

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